

The
**Strategic
Investment
Board**



Guide for
Contractors



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Introduction to Brokers



A broker is an organisation which works with people who are eligible for Buy Social opportunities. Brokers may be in a position to work with a contractor to help them meet their Buy Social requirements.

Brokers can help contractors meet their Buy Social requirements by:

- linking them with people who are eligible for Buy Social recruitment and training opportunities
- supporting/mentoring New Entrant Trainees as they begin employment with a contractor
- facilitating a contractor's business in education initiatives that may be a requirement of the contract
- being a Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise or microbusiness which is eligible to receive support as part of a contractor's social consideration requirements, which may be a requirement of the contract

The 'Find a Broker' section on the Buy Social website

(www.buysocialni.org/contractors/find-a-broker) helps contractors who win public contracts find brokers who can assist them in delivering their Buy Social obligations.

You should check your contract documents for full details of your Buy Social requirements but, in general, each New Entrant Trainee¹ vacancy should be notified to:

- one or more organisations registered on the 'Find a Broker' section of the Buy Social website; and,
- www.jobcentreonline.com

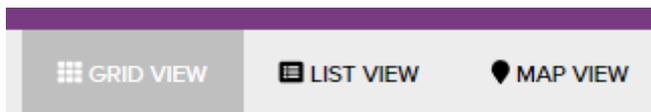
This guide will explain how to access the 'Find a Broker' section of the Buy Social website and how to notify vacancies to www.jobcentreonline.com. It will also provide information on various other resources that can help contractors recruit people to meet their contract's Buy Social requirements.

¹ See appendix 1 for more information on who is eligible as a New Entrant Trainee.

- Your results will appear below the search bar

The screenshot shows a search interface with filters for Type (Services), Location (Derry/Londonderry), Role (Trainee: Other), and Clause (Under 25 years old and unemp.). Below the filters, there are 35 matching results displayed in a grid. Each result card includes the company name, a contact person's name, phone number, email, and website, along with a 'MORE INFO' button. A callout box with a hand icon points to the 'MORE INFO' button for Michael Mulvenna at Action On Hearing Loss, with the text: 'For more information on a broker click here'.

- You can choose to view your results in Grid, List or Map view.



It is up to the contractor to decide who and how many brokers they work with. In our experience, building up a partnership approach with a few key brokers has worked well. For convenience, a draft template is provided in the next section, which you can use to start engaging with brokers.

For more information on the Buy Social 'Find a Broker' service, please contact info@buysocialni.org or telephone **028 9025 0900**.

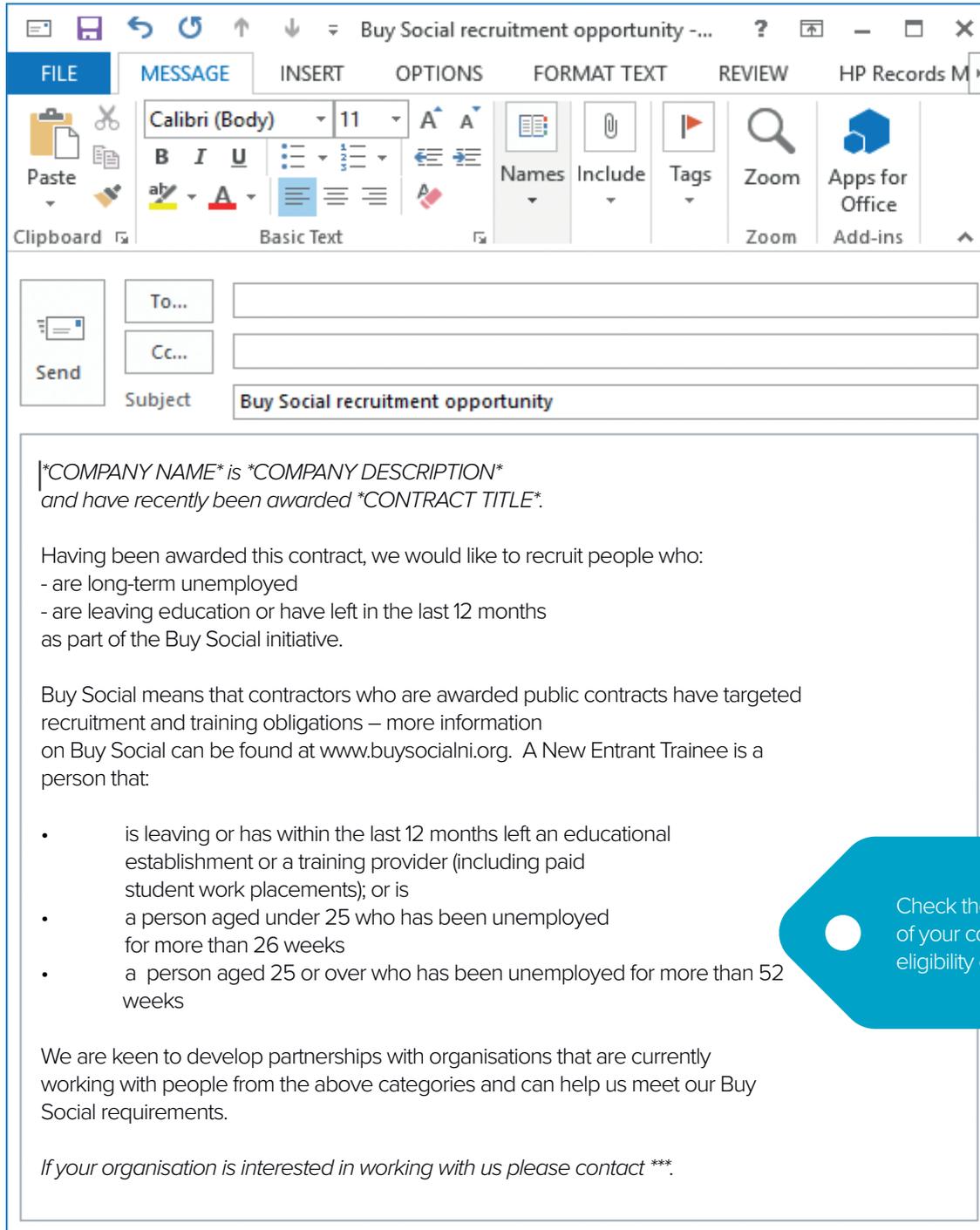
Do you have a question?

The Buy Social team are available to help contractors with their Buy Social contracts. You can contact the team via info@buysocialni.org or by calling **028 9025 0900**.



Template Text for Engaging with Brokers

The text below is one example of what you could write when emailing the list of brokers returned from your search:



The screenshot shows an email client window titled "Buy Social recruitment opportunity -...". The ribbon includes FILE, MESSAGE, INSERT, OPTIONS, FORMAT TEXT, REVIEW, and HP Records M. The ribbon is set to MESSAGE, showing options like Paste, Basic Text, Names, Include, Tags, Zoom, and Apps for Office. The email header shows "To...", "Cc...", and "Subject: Buy Social recruitment opportunity". The main body of the email contains the following text:

**COMPANY NAME* is *COMPANY DESCRIPTION* and have recently been awarded *CONTRACT TITLE*.*

Having been awarded this contract, we would like to recruit people who:

- are long-term unemployed
- are leaving education or have left in the last 12 months as part of the Buy Social initiative.

Buy Social means that contractors who are awarded public contracts have targeted recruitment and training obligations – more information on Buy Social can be found at www.buysocialni.org. A New Entrant Trainee is a person that:

- is leaving or has within the last 12 months left an educational establishment or a training provider (including paid student work placements); or is
- a person aged under 25 who has been unemployed for more than 26 weeks
- a person aged 25 or over who has been unemployed for more than 52 weeks

We are keen to develop partnerships with organisations that are currently working with people from the above categories and can help us meet our Buy Social requirements.

*If your organisation is interested in working with us please contact ***.*

Check the details of your contract for eligibility criteria

Advertising a vacancy on JobCentreOnline

All Buy Social employment opportunities must be notified to JobCentreOnline. Registering as an employer on Employers Online NI allows you to advertise job opportunities to prospective employees for free through JobCentreOnline, within Northern Ireland's 35 JobCentres, and across Europe. You can specify how you wish applicants to apply for the vacancy when you upload the details.

Step 1: Register as an Employer

- Go direct to Employers Online NI to create your vacancy at www.employersonlineni.com
- Select the following option:



- Follow the onscreen instructions to register as an employer.

Once you have registered, you will receive a User ID via email. You will get another email to inform you when your account has been verified and, after this, you can register vacancies online.

Step 2: Registering a vacancy

- Go direct to 'Create' Online NI to create your vacancy at www.employersonlineni.com.
- Select 'Create'.
- Follow the onscreen instructions to register your vacancy.
- In order to highlight that your vacancy is a Buy Social opportunity, you can include the following wording:
*"the successful applicant should be:
 A person who is leaving or has within the last 12 months left an educational establishment,
 OR
 A person aged under 25 that has been unemployed for more than 26 weeks,
 OR
 A person aged 25 or over that has been unemployed for more than 52 weeks"*
- Once your vacancy has been raised, it will be checked by a member of the Employer Vacancy Service team and made live.
- Once live you can manage the vacancy, making any necessary amendments until the vacancy is closed.

Further information and help to create a vacancy can be found at:
www.employersonlineni.com/help.aspx#CreateVacancy or call 028 9090 9338.

To speak to a member of the Employer Vacancy Service team email
employersonlineni@communities-ni.gov.uk or call 028 9090 9327.



Keeping Count of New Entrant Trainees

The following template can be used at each new employee’s induction to make sure that you are counting every person who counts as a New Entrant Trainee on your contract. By including it as part of your standard new employee procedures, you will be sure you are taking every opportunity to meet the Buy Social requirements of your contract.

You can download a copy of the template from the resources section of the Buy Social website: www.buysocialni.org/contractors/contractor-resources/

New Entrant Trainee Opportunities at ****insert contractor company****

****insert contractor company**** is delivering ****insert contract description**** for ****insert client name****. As part of this contract, we would like to recruit people who are long term unemployed or are leaving education/training.

To help us keep track of the number of people we recruit who are long term unemployed or are leaving education/training, please let us know if you meet any of the following criteria:

- You are leaving or have within the last 12 months left an education or training provider
- You are under 25 years of age and have been unemployed for more than 26 weeks
- You are aged 25 years or older and have been unemployed for more than 52 weeks

For office use only

Employee reference number: _____

Date consent form emailed to Buy Social Unit: _____

Date record added to Buy Social monitoring system: _____



Further Information and Support

Department for Communities' Employer Engagement Service

The Department for Communities' Employer Engagement Service offers a no cost recruitment service, tailored specifically to your needs, and is listed as a broker on the Buy Social website.

A dedicated Employer Engagement Executive will discuss your needs and agree a bespoke package. This may involve a specific recruitment event, local office or site visits for you to maximise staff knowledge on your company.

The Employer Engagement Service has direct access to a wide pool of jobseekers through the network of local JobCentres and Jobs and Benefits offices. If you would like to discuss the support available, you can contact them on **028 9090 9338** or via **employerengagementteam@communities-ni.gov.uk**

Graduate Internships NI

Graduate Internships NI is a free online portal to connect employers and graduates, developed by Business in the Community. After registering, you can upload information on paid graduate opportunities (of at least 6 months' duration) and search for potential candidates.

Business in the Community will support your business each step of the way: from posting and advertising positions, helping with graduate selection and providing ongoing support throughout the internship.

For more information email **andrew.nisbetfriel@bitcni.org.uk** or call **028 9046 0606**.

Connect to Success

Connect to Success is a free online system developed by the Department for the Economy to promote and advertise apprenticeship and work experience opportunities to people in Northern Ireland.

Once registered, you can upload information about your apprenticeship and/or school work experience opportunities on to the online portal for people to search. The system allows you to promote your company and the skills you need.



Horizontal lines for taking notes.



Meet some Buy Social Brokers

There is a vast range of brokerage organisations listed on the Buy Social website.² Often, these organisations are funded to support people back into employment.

This section offers a few examples of how some Buy Social brokerage organisations have been able to offer support to contractors.



mencap

The voice of
learning disability

Who are you?

Mencap

Where do you work?

Throughout Northern Ireland

What do you do?

Mencap have been supporting people with a learning disability to find and keep jobs in Northern Ireland for almost 30 years. We work closely with each person - as well as with their family and support networks - helping them to develop their employability skills and move closer to the world of work. We support employers to include people with a learning disability in the workplace and work with them to develop paid work opportunities where possible.

What Buy Social contracts have you contributed to?

Mencap employment services have worked with Farrans Construction on the Altnagelvin North Wing Redevelopment Hospital Project. Mencap have supported a person with a learning disability, who had been unemployed since being made redundant from a previous position, to secure employment under this Buy Social contract.

At Farrans, we recognise and accept the importance of investing in the local communities in which we operate. We will continue to work in partnership with Mencap, providing employability skills training and offering structured work experience, to bring real change to people with a learning disability”.

Community Engagement Manager
at Farrans Construction

The contact details of all Buy Social brokerage organisations is available via the 'Find a Broker' section on the Buy Social website: www.buysocialni.org/contractors/find-a-broker



²

Information on the 'Find a Broker' section of the Buy Social website is provided by brokerage organisations themselves. We are happy to provide this as a resource for contractors but cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information, nor do we recommend particular brokerage organisations.

Meet some Buy Social Brokers



Who are you?

Ingeus

Where do you work?

BT1 – BT23

What do you do?

For 15 years we have been delivering employment services in the UK. Ingeus has a strong history of delivering high quality services that support people to find suitable, lasting work.

What Buy Social contracts have you contributed to?

Ingeus has worked with several Buy Social contract organisations in NI including G4S, Aramark and GRAHAM Bam on some of the largest NI Construction and services projects. The work takes place across the province including Derry, North Antrim and most areas of Belfast.

Ingeus report: *“We have had great support from these companies who are enabling our long term unemployed customers access to jobs. Ingeus Employer Services Team liaise closely with Buy Social contract organisations and their hiring managers to maximise the opportunities for NI participants from our programme.”*

G4S are supportive of Buy Social. The new approach is easy to understand and implement due to its flexibility. We welcome the new monitoring arrangements so that we can showcase our commitment to employing people who want to get into work. Working in partnership with brokerage organisations has been really valuable and we have been able to recruit people who are long term unemployed into other contract work we deliver as well.

G4S



The contact details of all Buy Social brokerage organisations is available via the 'Find a Broker' section on the Buy Social website: www.buysocialni.org/contractors/find-a-broker

Meet some Buy Social Brokers



Who are you?

Springvale Learning

Where do you work?

BT1 - BT20

What do you do?

Located on the Springfield Road in Belfast, we support a diverse range of learners and jobseekers to break down barriers and reach their goals, whether that is to gain a vocational qualification or find a job.

What Buy Social contracts have you contributed to?

Springvale Learning worked with Woodvale Construction Ltd. on the Colaiste Feirste contract. *"We worked closely with Woodvale Construction to identify long term unemployed clients with construction as their long term job goal. We supported clients to overcome barriers such as housing support and interview skills. We invited the employer to carry out interviews on our premises and two clients were successfully employed and have remained in employment with Woodvale."*

Working with brokerage organisations has streamlined the recruitment process for us and we have been able to recruit long-term unemployed people and people in/leaving education who are work ready and keen to avail of opportunities to re-enter the workplace."

Yvonne Conway,
Community Benefits Officer
for Woodvale Construction



The contact details of all Buy Social brokerage organisations is available via the 'Find a Broker' section on the Buy Social website: www.buysocialni.org/contractors/find-a-broker

Meet some Buy Social Brokers



Who are you?

Disability Action

Where do you work?

Throughout Northern Ireland

What do you do?

Disability Action works to ensure that people with disabilities attain their full rights as citizens. Disability Action has a number of programmes that help people with disabilities find employment and support them in their place of work. We also provide advice and support for employers considering employing somebody with a disability or need advice to support an existing disabled employee.

What Buy Social contracts have you contributed to?

Disability Action worked with Whistl on the Northern Ireland Civil Service Postal Contract. They helped James secure a position with Whistl, who has now completed his 52 week Buy Social period and Whistl have retained him as permanent member of staff.

Disability Action commented: *"Disability Action supported [James] throughout the recruitment process with Whistl; from pre-employment stage to job start. James and his manager also continued to be supported by Job Match throughout his induction period to ensure his continued success and the development of his career."*

Not only did winning this contract have a positive impact on our Northern Ireland workforce but we also have the opportunity showcase the delivery of real, tangible, direct and indirect social benefits for Northern Ireland people.

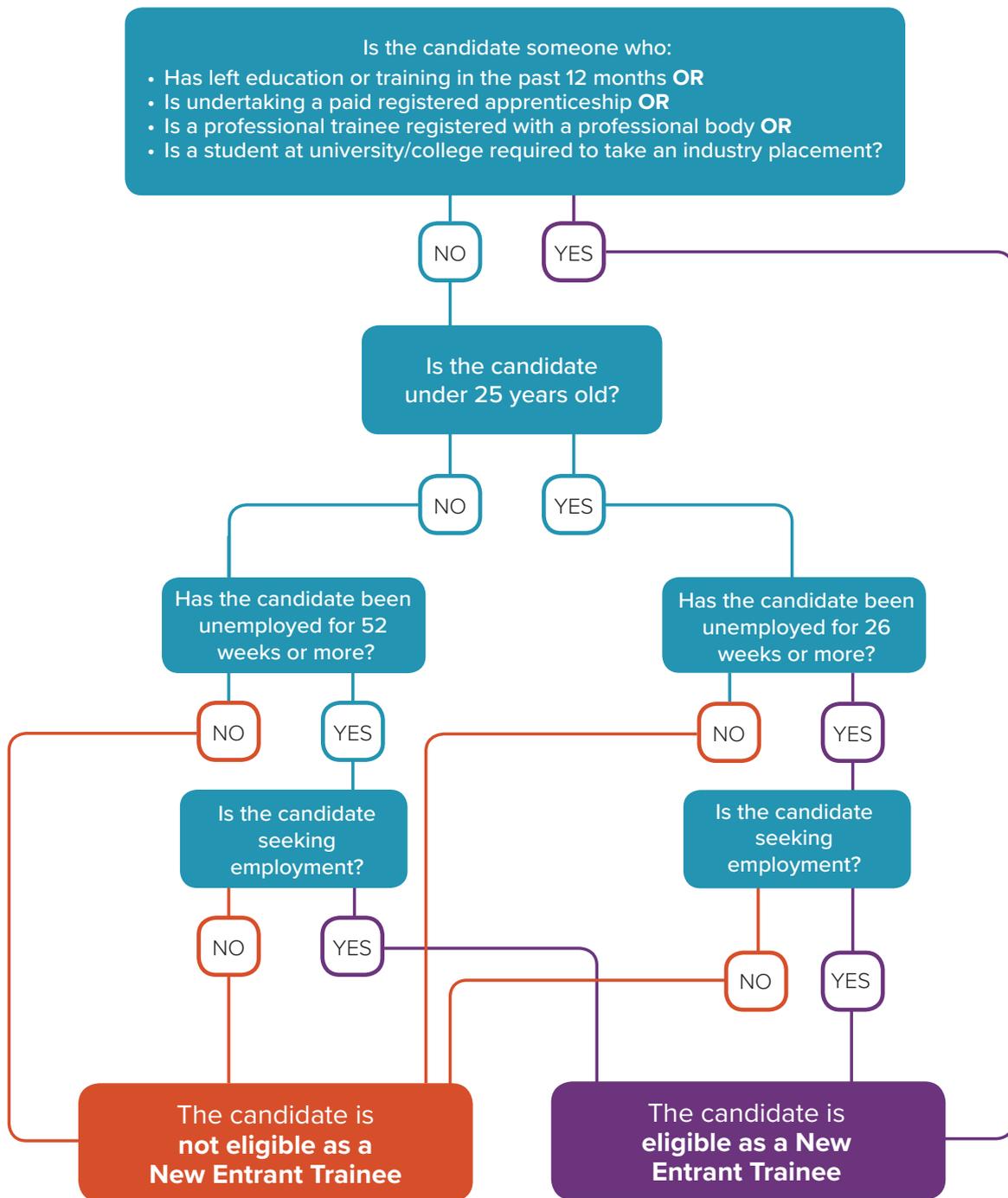
Tiemen Van Bruggen,
Operations Director for Whistl



The contact details of all Buy Social brokerage organisations is available via the 'Find a Broker' section on the Buy Social website: www.buysocialni.org/contractors/find-a-broker

Appendix 1

Who is a 'New Entrant Trainee' under the Buy Social model?



- Someone who started a New Entrant Trainee position but didn't reach the maximum number of weeks can "top up" their weeks allocation as a new entrant trainee on another contract.
- The contract clause contains full details of the contractor's Buy Social obligations

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The
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